1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

CHAPTER III.

KÛRDISH WOMEN: THEIR BELIEFS.

As Moslem beliefs generally will be described in relation to the Osmanli women, I shall not here discuss them, but merely remark that the Kûrds have the reputation of being very indifferent followers of the Prophet. It is, indeed, a common saying that "A saint cannot come out of Kûrdistan." They are careless and irregular in the performance of their devotions, and not at all inclined to keep the sacred fast of *Ramazan* so conscientiously as do their Osmanli neighbours. They object, for instance, to abstain from smoking between sunrise and sunset, and will indulge in a *narghileh* at noonday. "The Prophet did not forbid tobacco," they argue; "how could he forbid a thing he had never heard of? Besides, what is smoke?—nothing, or next to nothing." The Turks do not, however, interfere in their religious affairs. Their mosques are served by *imâms* of their own race, Kûrdish Mollahs expound to them the Moslem law, and their children are taught by Kûrdish schoolmasters. But, notwithstanding this fact, the theologians are, as a class, owing to their reputation for rapacity and greed, highly unpopular among their brother Kûrds. To the latter they are,

771
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installations in Rowanduz, the air of the communications office is heavy with tobacco smoke and its floor littered with cigarettes. Because of the importance of his task, the postmaster works in close touch with the qaimmaqam.

Some distance up the street leading to the left past the serai, next to the police detachment's quarters, is the Tobacco Monopoly, a large, barn-like structure, which, in addition to warehouse space, contains a few offices. One of the qaimmaqam's most important subordinates is the director of this monopoly. As in other countries, tobacco in Iraq offers a lucrative source of government revenue, particularly the tax on cigarettes, and is one of the most important cash crops of the Rowanduz district. The government controls the distribution of seed and purchases all of the crop from the cultivators after the harvest, a control which eliminates the profiteering of middlemen and at the same time assures itself a respectable profit. The harvested leaf is transmitted to the cigarette factories in Baghdad. The leaf grown in the Rowanduz district is typically small and extremely friable, but the government has introduced certain better strains of late. Cultivators or their overlords may retain small quantities of the harvest for their own consumption, usually prepared as cigarettes by hand within the households.

Across from the Tobacco Monopoly and police detachment, occupying a detached slope of land overlooking the gorge, is a single-storey cement-block hospital and several outbuildings.

mentioned. Precious stones and pearls are little in 301
evidence, but coins, of almost any age and variety, are often drilled and included in the ensembles. The silver khizam or nose-ring, sometimes containing a piece of turquoise, is only affected by women of the villages. Many married couples wear rings, usually of silver and sometimes set with a piece of coloured glass, on the third or fourth finger of the right hand, but they are not a necessary part of engagement or marriage. Men wear little jewelry save a ring and a few sport a silver or imitation gold watch-fob hanging from a breast pocket. [562]
There is some aversion on the part of men to wearing gold, and this is said to have a background in Islamic tradition. The elegant seal-rings of Medieval and Ottoman [212]
times have almost completely disappeared, except in a few of the older families, such as that of Ra'uf Effendi where they are preserved as heirlooms.

It has been seen that the townspeople have little 276
regard for intoxicants, nor do they make use of drugs such as the opium of Iran to the east or the hashish of Lebanon and Syria to the west. If there are excesses among the natives of Rowanduz, they are only tea-drinking and smoking, the first of which has been discussed. Cigarettes are the most popular mode of consuming tobacco, and have several varieties. From the merchants British cigarettes and those made in the factories of Baghdad may be obtained. The officials and officers habitually use these, and they are

usually offered to guests in wealthy homes or to visitors 276
to a shop in the bazar. Most of the populace, however,
smoke those prepared from local leaf in the houses by the
women. These are made in great quantity by filling manu-
factured paper tubes, about four inches in length, and
folding down the paper remaining at one end. A number of
persons possess small Austrian cigarette-rollers, devices
which can be carried on the person enclosing a certain
amount of tobacco and a book of papers. Factory-made
cigarettes are kept in their pasteboard boxes, and
Baghdadis, some of the government personnel, have nowadays [302]
the habit, probably ephemeral, of letting the nail of the
little finger on the left hand grow long with which to
slit open the package. The longer domestic product is
typically carried in a silvered metal box, resembling a
covered soap-dish, imported from abroad. A number of
persons use heavy cigarette holders of wood or imported
amberoid, out of proportion to the cigarette in thickness.
In Ottoman times, many had pipes with long stems, two or
three feet in length, but they have largely disappeared.
It is still possible to buy pottery bowls in the bazar
to which a drilled wooden shaft can be attached as a
stem, but they are not popular. The water-pipe is not
remembered as ever having had much use in the area. A
smaller pipe survives among the villagers and men of the
lower class, a stubby form in baked clay of curious design
with an overall length of about five inches and the height

of the bowl, two or three. One product of the area is a long wooden cigarette holder, cut from the thin branch of a cherry tree and laboriously drilled, but it has little more than curiosity value for the local people. European cigarette lighters are in great demand, and together with the dagger and the rosary form an important part in every adult male's ensemble. There are several varieties of these, and are Austrian in derivation. Several craftsmen in the town use flint and steel to light their pipes, but this is relatively rare, a survival among the poor and thrifty. Both men and women smoke, the latter as much as their husbands, and there is no restriction on youngsters. Children usually avoid tobacco as a matter of physical distaste, not because of any prohibition laid upon them. During the fasting hours of Ramadan it is considered impolite, if not impious, to smoke on the streets, although tobacco, of course, has no mention in the Quran.

Almost all of the houses are infested with mice, but, insofar as their inroads are not too intensive, they are not regarded as a particular nuisance. Homes of the lower classes, as well as the khan or hotel, are infested with vermin of various types, of which the chief scourge is the flea. Both flies and mosquitos are troublesome in the summer months, and some effort is expended to keep them from infants, but the greater number of adults pay little attention to them. Scorpions and snakes sometimes turn up, and are killed with the greatest possible dispatch.

keep their wives in seclusion, and this practice has quite recently sprung up being due to Turkish influence ..."[9]. Aael Edmonds writes: "Many travellers before 1914 recorded their impression that Kurdish women enjoyed in general a good deal more freedom than their Arab, Turkish and Persian sisters"[10]. In regard to marriage and the polygyni mentioned by the Cossa and known in other Muslim areas, Eagar[11] declares that: "The Kurd from north to south is monogamous" adding:[12] "For intercourse between the sexes is the rule, and the result is a large number of love marriages ...".

It is fact that the individual Kurdish women of the upper class has, in situations difficult for the Kurdish people, sprung into the limelight, which seems incompatible with the view adopted concerning women's restricted possibilities of action in Muslim areas, but may possibly be due to the prominent position of their families[13]. Khanum Cossa Pasha, Lady Adila of Halabja[14] of the Ardalan Yazir family, married to Cossa Pasha of the Begzada family, is the best known case. Her husband, towards the end of the Turkish period, was made the qa'im maqam in Halabja. Even whilst he gave alive all effective authority passed to his wife. In 1910 Major Soane lived as a servant with her son, Tahir Beg, after Soane had accepted Islam in 1906 and, under the name of Mirza Ghulam Hussein Shirazi, travelled in these areas in disguise. Later, under the British mandate after 1918, a spy she, now a widow, with whom the British political officers negotiated. Her personality must have been

Fig. 2. Village aristocracy. Married woman at the garden basin. Sarkan.
Fig. 3. Village aristocracy. Married woman making cigarettes. Sarkan. (See p. 10).

Fig. 11. Wooden plough from Topzawa. Side and lower part of the beam are in one piece. (E. 1240).

is also stressed by Lerch[69]. The same type of plough is used in Armenia and not, as might have been expected, the Turkish[70].

The plough is drawn by two animals, an ox and donkey or two oxen. They carry on their necks a yoke into which are stuck two sets of wooden sticks wound round with small pieces of felt to stop them galling the necks of the draught animals. The plough's beam is linked with a hook on the yoke by a rope ending in a noose.

The tobacco fields are cross-ploughed. The non-mouldboard plough does not turn the earth, but scratches it in furrows[71]. Working with it the man or woman must often place a foot on the beam at the side of the handle in order to keep the plough in the furrow. Water from watercourses is led over the tobacco fields through a main channel from which branch, like the teeth of a comb, side channels. These are opened and closed by means of a small earthwork. Tobacco is harvested at the beginning of September. Women with big pieces of canvas round their bodies like an apron—as in the case when transporting corn from the field to the house—pull the green tobacco leaves on long cords by the help of an iron nail. The tobacco leaves are thereafter dried in the sun and pulverized[72]. So far as I could discover the tobacco is not fermented. Pulverized tobacco cannot be rolled for

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Hard MA11

Fig. 12. The tobacco field is principal with corn, Tequesta.

So far as I could discover the Tobacco is not fermented. Pulverized Tobacco cannot be taken by

316 Tobacco is not fermented, but is pressed by hand into cigarette-sized paper tubes ending in a cardboard cylinder. These paper tubes, inserted in each other and collected in large packets, are purchased at the city in the town. They are placed in vertical groups on metal trays. The filling of the paper casings with pulverized tobacco is woman's work. (Tobacco sample: E. 2343).

562 Woman's world, like man's, is subject to the social structure of the village.

491 The villages I had an opportunity of visiting belonged to an [illegible] or equivalent. He had no need to
525 live in the village, for he could, for example, have resided in Sukelmani on the Sarakina plain[illegible]. Incidentally the owner of a village could be a woman managing the property for a son who had not
GT reached his majority, as was the case with Lady Adile's daughter-in-law, who at the time I met her was living at Sukelmani. It was said that she owned "many villages and watercourses". If the owner of a village did not dwell on his property he had in the village, according to Lambi[illegible], a manager "kokiba", to represent him. A village owner could be of the same family as his tenants or farmers, in which event relations were purely tribal. In cases I was able to investigate in Tequesta, Rabawa,
[154] Bargalo and Sarkam the chefdiks were not related to the inhabitants and conditions were feudal. The

585 from which clay stairs, with high, uneven steps, led up. From the back wall of the room there was access to two smaller apartments, the one of which was to be the bridal chamber. Mattresses to sit on were spread out along the back wall for the reception of the bride, and under them was placed a lump of honey wrapped in a bread "pancake". It was stated that this should assure the gentleness and sweetness of the bride. Naturally, the women brought with them their children of all ages so the room was full to overflowing. The places of honour for the sheikh's wife and daughter were on the mattresses lining the back wall. Entertainment during the wait consisted of cigarettes of Kurdish tobacco and very sweet tea served by the youngest of the women present, a girl of about 15. Into this feminine milieu, where the hostess was the bridegroom's mother[45], came, when the car cortège was sighted, the bridegroom and one or two male relatives who, like him, had not participated in the fetching of the bride. They helped him to smooth a stick about 2 metres long with which he took up his stand on the edge of the roof just above the entrance door, surrounded by the women, who had stood up and gone across the roof to him. Sweetmeats were passed round among the women; a fowl was held ready by a woman standing at the side of the bridegroom. When the bride was taken out of the bridal car she was led towards the house, supported by her two female companions, the aunt and the midwife from her own home. Like the other brides brought to the village she had over her turban a reddish-yellow, transparent gauze veil hanging down over her face[46], reddish-yellow was also the predominant colour of her dress[47], which despite the great heat consisted of so many layers of clothing that she had difficulty in moving. The costume was without belt, but this was no exception as women often went without belts. It had therefore hardly the significance mentioned by Granqvist in the case of the Palestinian Arabs: that the absence of the belt was to make her prolific[48]. As the bride approached the entrance to the house and was about to cross the threshold, the fowl was released and flew over her beating its wings; at the same time the bridegroom lifted the heavy stick, which he held in both hands, and gave her a powerful blow on the crown of the head. He and the other young men thereupon disappeared from the women's group and were not seen again as long as the guests stayed in the house. The bride was helped up the stairs by her two women companions, led across the room and given a seat on a mattress. The mother of the bridegroom bade her welcome by bending over her and placing her head first against her right, and then against her left, shoulder[49], whereafter the bride's reddish-yellow veil was raised and the women pressed around her in order to see the new member of the village community. It was stated that this bride and bridegroom had never seen each other before the wedding, and the only contact they had had so far was the blow given by the groom to his bride on her arrival at her future home. The bride's trousseau, purchased with the bride price, in this case supplemented by dowries given by the family, was carried up the stairs after her. The bridal chest (E. 2278) with a painted glass front, containing the rolled-up mattresses stuffed with cotton that were to comprise the marriage bed, and the unavoidable battery-operated wireless set, were carried into the room that was to serve as the bridal chamber.

585 The bride was tattooed on the back of the hand with three dots at the base of the little finger. Her 304 finger tips were stained with henna as were also the palms, the latter being painted with a sun, a crescent 305 moon and a star. She wore stockings, a thing ? otherwise only seen among Turkish women in Mosul, 292 so it was not possible to know whether her feet also were henna-stained.

8: Leach E-S (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

Effects of an Increase in Tobacco Cultivation

276 249 The Kurds are inveterate smokers and have cultivated their own varieties of tobacco for several centuries. Though these particular varieties are still the preferred smoke for the Kurds themselves, they have little or no trade value owing to the crumbly nature of the leaf. In recent years however a number of modern cigarette factories have been started in and around Baghdad, thus creating a good market for a better class leaf. In the main this market is satisfied by the more sophisticated Kurdish areas such as Sulaimani, but the tribesmen of the Rowanduz district are also slowly beginning to adapt their production to the new conditions. In this they receive encouragement from the Government and the factory owners who supply free seed and instruction to those who want it; this service by the Government is of course more than recouped by the ultimate excise on the resulting product.

311 249 Under these new conditions the improved tobacco leaf has a cash value proportionately vastly in excess of that of wheat or rice. In terms of a money economics it would be sensible to increase the area of land devoted to the production of tobacco at the expense of that devoted to wheat and rice.

Furthermore since, other things being equal, the area of tobacco cultivation would again only be limited by the supply of irrigation water available, the logical thing to do would be to abolish the rice cultivation altogether and substitute tobacco, both on the rice land itself and also on much of the wheat land - (tobacco requiring less water than rice). This development has actually taken place in certain of the lowland villages, notably in the Assyrian community round Betas, and the resulting financial advantage has been very marked; but in the Balik area the increase in tobacco acreage seems so far to have been very slight. In the highest villages such as Khalan and Rayat climatic conditions are probably unfavourable, but lower down in the valleys around Barga and Dergala where tobacco and rice are at present grown side by side there seems to be no immediate technical reason why the former crop should not be expanded. There would of course be certain difficulties in connection with the re-organisation of the water courses, and there is the problem of specialist training in tobacco cultivation but in the main it would appear that the problems involved are social rather than technical. If it were possible for every individual tenant to grow tobacco in equal quantities the transition to a modern cash economy might be simple. But in practice the existing tenancy rights are such that any extension of the tobacco cultivation must affect unequally different sections of the community - those whose land is converted to the new cultivation benefiting at the expense of the rest. We may analyse the problem in economic form in terms of the factors of production involved.

630 Land. The land potentially available for tobacco cultivation

4a Wilson G-3 (no date) 1937 MHI Iraq MHI

a severe slump in the camel market. Slowly and very reluctantly the bedouin are turning to cultivation and feel themselves immeasurably lowered in the process. Strangely enough, they are also to be found in greasy overalls, working on the rigs of the Mosul Oil Companies. In this work they do not lose caste as they do if they become cultivators.

Shaikh Ajil al Yawar is the paramount Shaikh of the 'Iraqi Shammar. He is an outstanding personality possessing a fine presence and a wonderful charm of manner. With singular astuteness he has managed to control his tribesmen, keep on the right side of successive governments and at the same time amass a considerable fortune for himself. During recent years his figure has perhaps suffered somewhat from the use of motor-cars instead of riding a fiery Arab steed or liver-shaking "dhillool" (trotting camel).

Turkomans

Leaving the Arabs, we come to the Turkomans. They are the remnants of ancient immigration and are to be found in Tël Affar town between Mosul and Sinjar and in a string of villages across to Altun Keupri and Kirkuk. Arbil is also largely a Turkoman town. The village of Nainawa, the ancient Nineveh, just across the Tigris from Mosul, is Turkoman. In a mosque built on uncxcavated Assyrian remains it contains the reputed tomb of the prophet Jonah. The mosque is also said to contain a portion of the vertebræ of the whale!

Kurds

Next we come to the Kurds, who form by far the majority of the population of the mountain areas and who are also to be found in a large number of villages well south of the mountains. The Kurds are Aryan in origin and Sunni Muslims by religion. The mountain Kurds and in fact all the mountaineers of Kurdistan bear a close resemblance to the Scottish clans of two hundred years ago. They are still organized on a tribal or clan basis, though the increase in government control and influence is naturally tending to destroy this organization and undermine the power of the chiefs, or Aghas as they are called. Aghas may, however, still be seen proceeding to town or market with a "tail" of armed henchmen and even a pipebearer. The Kurdish pipebearer is, however, concerned with the Agha's tobacco pipe and not with music. Kurdish music is nevertheless played on a pipe